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0002/PTO(modified) Rev. 10/2000	U.S. Department of Commerce Patent and Trademark Office	<b>Complete if Known</b>	
<b>FEE TRANSMITTAL</b>  <b>TOTAL AMOUNT OF PAYMENT</b> Subtotal (1) + Subtotal (2) + Subtotal (3) = <b>(\$ 1074.00)</b>		Application Number	not yet known
		Filing Date	October 24, 2000
		First Named Inventor	Roger D. Melen
		Group Art Unit	not yet known
		Examiner Name	not yet known
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METHOD OF PAYMENT	FEE CALCULATION (continued)																																																																																								
<b>1. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to:</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Charge \$54 of the indicated fees to the below mentioned deposit account.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Charge any additional fee required under 37 CFR 1.16 - 1.21 or credit any over payments to the below mentioned deposit account. †  <input type="checkbox"/> Applicant claims small entity status See 37 CFR 1.27  Deposit Account Number: 19-2555 Deposit Account Name: FENWICK & WEST LLP  A Duplicate Copy of this authorization is attached  <b>2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Payment Enclosed:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check in the amount of \$1020.00	<b>3. ADDITIONAL FEES</b> <table style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width:15%;">Large Entity Fee Code/Fee</th> <th style="width:15%;">Small Entity Fee Code/Fee</th> <th style="width:50%;">Fee Description</th> <th style="width:20%;">Fee Due</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>105/\$130</td><td>205/\$65</td><td>Surcharge - late filing fee or oath</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>127/\$50</td><td>227/\$25</td><td>Surcharge-late provisional filing fee or cover sheet</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>147/\$2,520</td><td>147/\$2,520</td><td>For filing a request for reexamination</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>115/\$110</td><td>215/\$55</td><td>Extension for response within first month†</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>116/\$390</td><td>216/\$195</td><td>Extension for response within second month†</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>117/\$890</td><td>217/\$445</td><td>Extension for response within third month†</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>118/\$1,390</td><td>218/\$695</td><td>Extension for response within fourth month†</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>128/\$1,890</td><td>228/\$945</td><td>Extension for response within fifth month†</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>119/\$310</td><td>219/\$155</td><td>Notice of Appeal</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>141/\$1,240</td><td>241/\$620</td><td>Petition to revive unintentionally abandoned application</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>142/\$1,240</td><td>242/\$620</td><td>Utility Issue Fee (Or Reissue)</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>143/\$440</td><td>243/\$220</td><td>Design Issue Fee</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>122/\$130</td><td>122/\$130</td><td>Petitions to the Commissioner</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>126/\$240</td><td>126/\$240</td><td>Submission of Information Disclosure Statement</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>179/\$710</td><td>279/\$355</td><td>Request for Continued Examination (RCE)</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>581/\$40</td><td>581/\$40</td><td>Recording each patent assignment per property (times number of properties)</td><td>40</td></tr> <tr><td>146/\$710</td><td>246/\$355</td><td>Filing a submission after final rejection (37 CFR 1.129(a))</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>149/\$710</td><td>249/\$355</td><td>For each additional invention to be examined (37 CFR 1.129(b))</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td colspan="3">Other fee (specify):</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td colspan="3">Other fee (specify):</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: right;"><b>SUBTOTAL (3)</b></td> <td><b>(\$ 40)</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Large Entity Fee Code/Fee	Small Entity Fee Code/Fee	Fee Description	Fee Due	105/\$130	205/\$65	Surcharge - late filing fee or oath		127/\$50	227/\$25	Surcharge-late provisional filing fee or cover sheet		147/\$2,520	147/\$2,520	For filing a request for reexamination		115/\$110	215/\$55	Extension for response within first month†		116/\$390	216/\$195	Extension for response within second month†		117/\$890	217/\$445	Extension for response within third month†		118/\$1,390	218/\$695	Extension for response within fourth month†		128/\$1,890	228/\$945	Extension for response within fifth month†		119/\$310	219/\$155	Notice of Appeal		141/\$1,240	241/\$620	Petition to revive unintentionally abandoned application		142/\$1,240	242/\$620	Utility Issue Fee (Or Reissue)		143/\$440	243/\$220	Design Issue Fee		122/\$130	122/\$130	Petitions to the Commissioner		126/\$240	126/\$240	Submission of Information Disclosure Statement		179/\$710	279/\$355	Request for Continued Examination (RCE)		581/\$40	581/\$40	Recording each patent assignment per property (times number of properties)	40	146/\$710	246/\$355	Filing a submission after final rejection (37 CFR 1.129(a))		149/\$710	249/\$355	For each additional invention to be examined (37 CFR 1.129(b))		Other fee (specify):				Other fee (specify):				<b>SUBTOTAL (3)</b>			<b>(\$ 40)</b>
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\* Subtract the greater number of Col. 2

\*\* If the difference between Col. 1 and Col. 2 is less than zero, then enter "0" in Col. 3

<b>SUBMITTED BY</b>		<b>Complete (if applicable)</b>	
Typed or Printed Name	Edward J. Radlo	Reg. Number	26,793
Signature		Date	Oct. 24, 2000

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Description

BUSINESS METHOD FOR SECURE DOCUMENT FOLDER DISTRIBUTION

Inventors: Roger D. Melen, Boris Krtolica, Neil Williams

Background of The Invention

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates generally to distribution of collections of large documents in electronic form, and more particularly, to a business method for secure document folder distribution.

2. Description of Background Art

The expanded popularity of the Internet has brought new problems to Internet users. As users conduct more business over the Internet, they need to send collections of large documents. Electronic mail has become a popular and widespread means for communicating electronically via interlinked computers. Files, including electronic image files, may be attached to electronic mail messages. Small documents may be sent easily through the Internet as file attachments. Larger documents and collections of larger

1 documents of more than 5 MB, however, are more difficult to  
2 send reliably through the Internet without losing the  
3 benefit of security.  
4

5 Furthermore, sending collections of large documents of  
6 more than 5 MB over the Internet is very time-consuming and  
7 takes up a lot of network resources. For example, if a  
8 sender wants to transmit the same document to ten  
9 recipients, he needs to attach ten electronic image files  
10 to electronic mail messages, thereby significantly  
11 increasing the delivery time.  
12

13 What is needed, therefore, is a method and system  
14 that allows a sender to send collections of large documents  
15 to possibly multiple recipients in a short period of time.  
16

### 17 Disclosure of Invention

18  
19  
20 The present invention is a system, method, and  
21 computer readable medium for a business to securely  
22 distribute document folders (180) to recipients (140). The  
23 system comprises a sending device (160) for sending the  
24 document folders (180) and temporarily storing the document  
25 folders (180) on a network (120) of interconnected  
26 computers (170), a destination computer (170) for  
27 accumulating the sent document folders (180) stored on the  
28

1 network (120), and a receiving device (130) for receiving  
2 the sent document folders (180) from the destination  
3 computer (170).  
4

5 The method comprises the steps of sending the document  
6 folders (180) to a network (120) of interconnected  
7 computers (170); notifying each recipient (140) of the sent  
8 document folders by means of an indirect reference to the  
9 electronic document folders (180); selecting a destination  
10 location (170) for the electronic document folders using  
11 data supplied by each recipient (140); and accumulating the  
12 electronic document folders (180) at the destination  
13 location (170).  
14

15 An advantage of the present invention is that it  
16 allows distributing collections of large documents of more  
17 than 5 MB to multiple recipients (140) in a short period of  
18 time without overly consuming network (120) resources.  
19

#### 20 21 Brief Description of the Drawings

22

23 The above and other more detailed and specific objects  
24 and features of the present invention are more fully  
25 disclosed in the following specification, reference being  
26 had to the accompanying drawings, in which:  
27  
28

1           Figure 1 is a block diagram of a preferred embodiment  
2  
3 of the present invention.

4           Figure 2 is flow chart illustrating a preferred  
5 embodiment of the present invention.

6           Figure 2A illustrates an example of a database record  
7 222 provided by a recipient 140 to retrieve an electronic  
8 document folder 180.

9           Figure 3 illustrates a block diagram of a seal 302  
10 attachment system usable in the present invention.

11           Figure 4 is a block diagram illustrating an  
12 administrative subsystem 410, a billing subsystem 420, and  
13 a billing database 430 located on a server 170 of the  
14 present invention.

15           Figure 5 is a block diagram illustrating billing  
16 database 430.

17           Figure 6 is a block diagram showing an example of a  
18 billing record 510.

19           Figure 7 is a flow chart illustrating an operation of  
20 billing subsystem 420.

21           Figure 8 is a flow chart illustrating an operation of  
22 administrative subsystem 410.

23           Figure 9 shows an overview of a client registration  
24 process according to a preferred embodiment of the present  
25 invention.  
26  
27  
28

1  
2  
3  
4       Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments  
5

6       The present invention is a system, method, and  
7 computer readable medium for a business to securely  
8 distribute document folders 180 to recipients 140.  
9

10       The configuration depicted in Fig. 1 includes at least  
11 one, and preferably a plurality of, senders 110; at least  
12 one document folder 180 that sender 110 wants to send to at  
13 least one recipient 140; a sending device 160; document  
14 folders in electronic form 190; a network 120 of  
15 interconnected computers 170; at least one destination  
16 computer 170; at least one receiving device 130 associated  
17 with each destination computer 170; an optional  
18 notification device 135; one or more recipients 140; and an  
19 optional seal engine 150. More than one recipient 140 can  
20 be associated with each receiving device 130. Each  
21 document folder 180 contains at least one, and typically a  
22 plurality of, documents 178.  
23

24       A sender 110 is a person who wishes to send a document  
25 folder 180 to one or more recipients 140. Sender 110  
26 inputs the document folders 180, which may be in paper or  
27 electronic form, into a sending device 160. The sending  
28

1 device 160 can be a scanner, a Web-enabled personal  
2 computer, a facsimile machine, or any other device which  
3 can process documents 178 and output them in electronic  
4 form 190. The electronic document folders 190 are sent to  
5 the network 120, where they are temporarily stored.

7       The purpose of the network 120 is to distribute and  
8 process the documents 178. Sending the document folders 180  
9 to network 120 avoids a single point of failure. In the  
10 event any particular computer 170 in the network 120 fails,  
11 the continuous operation of the overall network 120 is not  
12 compromised; the network 120 is tolerant to software and  
13 hardware problems or faults. Each interconnected computer  
14 170 in the network 120 is typically a server computer,  
15 including a processor and a memory. The memory includes  
16 instructions capable of being executed by the processor to  
17 perform the functions described below. Each server 170 can  
18 also include a computer readable medium for storing these  
19 instructions.

22       One server 170, e.g., the server 170 shown on Fig. 1  
23 as containing database 175, may be entrusted with certain  
24 supervisory functions. This computer 170 notifies  
25 recipients 140 of document folder 180 delivery. This  
26 server 170 optionally records an acknowledgment of document  
27 folder 180 delivery and makes said acknowledgment available  
28



1 to sender 110. One or more servers 170 may also process  
2 sent document folders 180 to convert them into a different  
3 format or formats (such as a page description language) to  
4 assure they work optimally with each receiving device 130;  
5 perform an optional authentication process; and/or perform  
6 administrative and billing functions.  
7

8 One or more computers 170 accumulate sent document  
9 folders 180 for delivery to recipients 140. These  
10 computers 170 are known as destination computers 170 or  
11 destination locations 170. More than one recipient 140 can  
12 select the same destination computer 170. Conversely, each  
13 recipient may retrieve document folders 180 from more than  
14 one destination computer 170. Each destination computer  
15 170, which can be any server 170 in the network 120, is  
16 preferably located at a partnership business facility that  
17 has agreed to participate in the business of securely  
18 distributing document folders 180 to recipients 140. The  
19 partnership business facility can be any facility providing  
20 printing or photocopying services to clients (e.g.,  
21 Kinko's).  
22  
23

24 When a recipient 140 wishes to retrieve electronic  
25 document folders 180, the recipient 140 provides to the  
26 notifying server 170 information from the indirect  
27 reference to the electronic document folders 180 that was  
28

1 contained in the notification to the recipient 140, and  
2 possibly other data 222. This data 222 supplied by  
3 recipient 140 is recorded in database 175, which is located  
4 on at least one of the servers 170.  
5

6 At least one receiving device 130 is associated with  
7 each destination computer 170, preferably co-located at the  
8 same partnership business facility. Receiving device 130  
9 can be a Web-enabled personal computer; a Web-enabled  
10 printer, such as kiosk printer, connected to network 120; a  
11 Web-connected digital copier that has a built-in personal  
12 computer with Internet connection; or an Internet  
13 appliance, which could be a Web-enabled television.  
14

15 The system further optionally includes one or more  
16 separate notification devices 135 to assist recipient 140  
17 in receiving notifications of sent electronic document  
18 folders 180. Alternatively, notification of sent documents  
19 178 can be made through a destination computer 170 and/or a  
20 receiving device 130. Notification device 135 can be a  
21 Web-enabled personal computer, a Web-enabled Internet  
22 appliance, a cellular telephone, or any other device  
23 capable of sending messages to recipients 140. Receiving  
24 notification via notification device 135 advantageously  
25 gives recipients 140 timely knowledge of when a sender 110  
26 has sent document folders 180.  
27  
28

1 Optional seal engine 150 is co-located with at least  
2 one computer 170. Engine 150, which may be embodied in  
3 hardware, firmware, and/or software, encodes information  
4 and attaches a seal 302 to documents 178 based upon  
5 instructions conveyed from senders 110 and/or recipients  
6 140. Seal engine 150 is used for authentication purposes  
7 to assure that a document 178 which apparently came from a  
8 sender 110 is a document actually sent by the sender 110.  
9 The seal 302 is a digital collection of information which  
10 may be encoded into the image 190 of the document 178. The  
11 information contained in seal 302 provides surety and  
12 guards against forgery.

13  
14  
15 The system is described above in connection with the  
16 Internet as network 120. However, a wide variety of  
17 networks 120, including local area networks (LANs), wide-  
18 area networks (WANs), and intranets can be used instead.

19  
20 Figure 2 illustrates that the method of the present  
21 invention starts 200 by a sender 110 sending one or more  
22 document folders 180 to the network 120, at step 203. The  
23 sender 110 typically forwards the document folders 180 to  
24 sending device 160. In one embodiment of the present  
25 invention, the sender 110 scans the document folders into a  
26 scanner 160 (or the sender instructs the business to scan  
27 the document folders into the scanner 160 for him). In an  
28

1 alternative embodiment, the sender 110 forwards the  
2 documents 178 to the network 120 from his personal computer  
3 160. Device 160 typically converts the documents 178 into  
4 images 190. Information in the document folders 180 is  
5 distributed, e.g., by being broken up into packets, into  
6 the network 120, where it is temporarily stored.  
7

8       The clients of the business (anyone from the group of  
9 senders 110 and recipients 140) have an option of  
10 specifying a date of expiration of the document folders 180  
11 stored on the network 120. Also, the business and one or  
12 more clients 110, 140 can mutually agree upon the period of  
13 time the document folders 180 can be stored on the network  
14 120 at no cost to the client 110, 140. It should be noted  
15 that a given document folder 180 might comprise only one  
16 document 178 or a plurality of documents 178. The  
17 documents 178 can be in different file formats, such as  
18 audio, video, or formats having printable representation.  
19 One of the best modes of carrying out the present invention  
20 is sending documents 178 having printable representation,  
21 so that remote recipients 140 can conveniently print the  
22 sent documents 178 at a convenient destination location  
23 170.  
24

25       The document folders 180 can be sent to the network  
26 120 using virtual private network (VPN) security. A VPN is  
27  
28

1 a network that is constructed using public wires to connect  
2 nodes. There are a number of VPN systems that enable one to  
3 create networks using the Internet as the medium for  
4 transporting data. These systems use encryption and other  
5 security mechanisms to ensure that only authorized users  
6 can access the network 120 and that the data cannot be  
7 intercepted.  
8

9       Once the document folders 180 have been temporarily  
10 stored on the network 120, the documents 178 are typically  
11 converted into a page description language or format 190  
12 (in step 204 of Fig. 2) by one of the computers 170.  
13 Converting a document 178 into page description format  
14 (PDF) does not allow a recipient 140 to change the format  
15 and content of the received document 178. This feature  
16 provides for portability and commonality of format and can  
17 mask some anomalies of technology on the reception end.  
18 PDF captures formatting information from a variety of  
19 desktop publishing applications, making it possible to send  
20 formatted documents and have them appear on the recipient's  
21 monitor or printer 130 as the sender 110 intended them.  
22 Alternatively, conversion to PDF can be done by sending  
23 device 160 prior to transmitting the documents 180 onto the  
24 network 120.  
25  
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1 In step 205, one of the computers 170 notifies  
2 recipient 140 of a sent document folder 180 by means of  
3 providing an indirect reference to the document folder 180.  
4 An indirect reference to the electronic document folder 180  
5 can be a folder code containing information needed to  
6 retrieve the document folder 180. This information can be,  
7 for example, a document number.

9 A folder code may be a privacy code or mediacard data.  
10 A privacy code can be automatically sent to recipient 140  
11 via e-mail when the document 178 is available for access  
12 from the network 120. This privacy code may be a simple  
13 set of numbers and may be viewed on a simple display 130,  
14 135, such as found on many cellular phones. The privacy  
15 code, which arrives in an encrypted form, helps to ensure  
16 that unauthorized users cannot access the sent document  
17 folders 180. To read an encrypted file, recipient 140 must  
18 have access to a password that enables recipient 140 to  
19 decrypt it. The encryption and decryption can be performed  
20 using symmetric key (secret key) or asymmetric key (public  
21 key) cryptography.

24 When public key cryptography is used, two keys are  
25 used--a public key known to everyone and a private or  
26 secret key known only to the recipient 140 of the message.  
27 When a sender 110 wants to send a secure document to a  
28

1 recipient 140, the sender 110 uses the recipient's public  
2 key to encrypt the message. Recipient 140 then uses his or  
3 her private key to decrypt it. At least one server 170  
4 located on the network 120 has a table of clients' names  
5 and their corresponding public keys. When the designated  
6 server 170 sends a notification message to a recipient 140,  
7 recipient 140 can decrypt the message using his or her  
8 private key.

10 A folder code can also be mediocard data. A mediocard  
11 is an electronic device that contains electronic memory. A  
12 mediocard preferably should be delivered to a recipient 140  
13 prior to document folder 180 retrieval. Such a mediocard  
14 may be created using a networked transmission of mediocard  
15 data as part of the mediocard delivery process.

17 It should be noted that the document folder 180  
18 retrieval need not be based on privacy code or mediocard  
19 data. Any data providing an indirect reference to  
20 electronic document folders 180 can be used in the delivery  
21 process.

23 The indirect reference notification can arrive at  
24 notification device 135 or receiving device 130. The  
25 notification can be in the form of e-mail if device 135 is  
26 a Web-enabled personal computer, or via voice mail if  
27 device 135 is a cellular telephone, or by a combination of  
28

1 e-mail and voice mail. The notification message informs  
2 recipient 140 that at least one document folder 180 has  
3 been sent to that recipient 140 and is ready for pickup.  
4

5 Once the notification arrives at device 135, a  
6 designated computer 170 selects a destination location or  
7 locations 170 for the electronic document folders 180 using  
8 data provided by each recipient 140, in step 206. Such  
9 data can include document 178 reception address data,  
10 and/or additional document 178 reception data.

11 Document 178 reception address data can be path  
12 information and/or method for network document folder 180  
13 delivery. An example of document 178 reception address  
14 data is:  
15

16 ftp://avistadel.com/doc/print/tty.prn (see Fig. 2A)

17 Additional document 178 reception data can include  
18 document 178 reception location data (data used for  
19 improving the document 178 delivery experience through the  
20 knowledge of the geographical location of the receiving  
21 equipment 130 and the destination location 170 of the  
22 receiving equipment 130) and/or receiving device 130  
23 capabilities (screen/printer capabilities of the receiving  
24 device 130, such as text/graphics, color or black and white  
25 representation).  
26  
27  
28



1           In step 207, the process proceeds by a designated  
2 computer 170 optionally automatically modifying information  
3 contained in document folders 180 for best recipient 140  
4 use with regard to receiving device 130 capabilities. For  
5 example, if the receiving device 130 is a black and white  
6 printer, the business may have decided that it is desirable  
7 to modify document 178 data to remove any color information  
8 contained in document images 190 for fastest transmission  
9 on the network 120. Similarly, if the receiving equipment  
10 130 has text, but not graphic capabilities, the business  
11 may have decided that it is desirable to modify the  
12 document 178 data so that only text is included.

13           Recipient 140 or sender 110 may optionally (in step  
14 208) request authentication of documents 178 to assure that  
15 recipient 140 takes delivery of an actual document 178 sent  
16 by sender 110, and not a forged document. When the  
17 authentication process is included, seal 302 is attached to  
18 a document 178 by seal engine 150. The seal 302 is a  
19 digital collection of information which may be encoded into  
20 document image 190.

21           In step 210, a designated computer 170 causes the sent  
22 document folders 180 to accumulate on destination computer  
23 170 using data 222 provided by recipient 140. When  
24 recipient 140 requests the designated computer 170 to  
25  
26  
27  
28

1 deliver the sent document folders 180, he or she may select  
2 the destination computer 170 to be used.

3  
4 To retrieve the sent document folders 180, recipient  
5 140 is prompted in step 212 by the designated computer 170  
6 to enter information from the indirect reference  
7 notification. For example, this information may be a  
8 document number. The business may impose a requirement  
9 that recipient 140 provide this information in encrypted  
10 form.

11  
12 In step 214, recipient 140 takes document delivery  
13 based on all the information and data 222 submitted, using  
14 receiving device 130.

15 Once recipient 140 takes delivery of document folders  
16 180, the process ends in step 216.

17 Figure 2A illustrates an example of typical data 222  
18 provided by recipient 140 to optimize and tailor the  
19 retrieval of electronic document folders 180. This data  
20 222 supplied by recipient 140 is sent to database 175,  
21 which is located on at least one of the servers 170. An  
22 exemplary data record 222 has the following fields:  
23 sender's name, recipient's name, document 178 reception  
24 address data, and additional document 178 reception data.  
25 The latter field is broken into two subfields: receiving  
26  
27  
28

1 device 130 capabilities and document 178 reception location  
2 data.

3  
4 The document 178 reception address data can include  
5 path information and/or method for network document folder  
6 180 delivery.

7 The document 178 reception location 170 data is  
8 particularly useful when the document 178 may be sent to  
9 several destination servers 170 throughout the world. The  
10 document 178 reception location 170 data is used for  
11 improving the document 178 delivery experience by using the  
12 geographical location of the receiving device 130 and the  
13 network 120 location of the receiving device 130. The  
14 preferred destination server 170 for document 178 delivery  
15 may be determined using this location data.

16  
17 Recipient 140, using notification device 135 and/or  
18 receiving device 130, is prompted in step 212 to provide  
19 any document 178 reception address data and any additional  
20 document 178 reception data before the destination location  
21 170 is selected for the document folders 180 delivery.

22  
23 This data 222 is recorded in database 175. The exemplary  
24 database record 222 shown in Fig. 2A includes a sender's  
25 name= "SMITH"; a recipient's name="WARREN"; document 178  
26 reception address data=

27 "ftp:/avistadel.com/doc/print/tty.prn; receiving device 130  
28

1 capabilities= "color, 300dpi, pdf"; document 178 reception  
2 location data = 73 DX STREET, BESTTOWN, CA 59959, and the  
3 Internet address of the nearest server 170 to the receiving  
4 location 130: 333.444.555.66. Once recipient 140 provides  
5 the above data 222, the designated computer 170 (typically  
6 computer 170 co-located with database 175) selects the  
7 destination location 170 for the document folder 180  
8 delivery. Some or all of the data 222 can be provided to  
9 the designated supervisory computer 170 automatically by  
10 receiving device 130. Alternatively, data 222 can be hand-  
11 entered into receiving device 130 or notification device  
12 135, by recipient 140.

15 Figure 3 is a block diagram of a seal 302 attachment  
16 system. When the authentication step 208 is included, seal  
17 302 is attached to the document 178 by seal engine 150. The  
18 seal 302 is a digital collection of information which may  
19 be encoded into a document image 190. In one embodiment of  
20 the present invention, the attached seal 302 includes  
21 information contained in the sent document 178, such as a  
22 portion of image 190 of the sent document 178, as well as  
23 information not contained in the sent document 178, which  
24 information might include one or more pieces of key  
25 information, such as a file size, a date and time of  
26 transmission, a protocol identification, such as  
27  
28

1 Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP),  
2 and information known only by a recipient 140, such as the  
3 recipient's mother's maiden name.  
4

5 In the illustrated example, sender 110 wants to send a  
6 title transfer document 300 to a recipient 140. As a  
7 result of the authentication procedure, seal engine 150  
8 attaches seal 302, encoding a complete representation of  
9 the original document 178 as well as information not  
10 contained in the sent title transfer document 300. Such  
11 information includes the following: a file size of 7 MB, a  
12 date of transmission 8/24/00, a time of transmission 3:24  
13 P.M. Pacific Daylight Savings Time, protocol information  
14 TCP/IP, and "Watson" as the recipient's mother's maiden  
15 name. The latter information is useful for authentication  
16 because only an intended recipient 140 is likely to know  
17 this information. The printed title transfer document 304  
18 that is sent to recipient 140 has the attached seal 302.  
19 The seal 302 embodiment of the present invention  
20 advantageously allows assuring that the received document  
21 178 is an authentic one.  
22

24 Fig. 4 is a block diagram illustrating an  
25 administrative subsystem 410, a billing subsystem 420, and  
26 a billing database 430 that are typically located on at  
27 least one server 170 (for example, the server 170 co-  
28

1 located with database 175). It should be understood that  
2 the architecture shown in Fig. 4 is an example only and is  
3 not to be construed in a limiting sense.  
4

5 A sender 110 may periodically deliver document folders  
6 180 to the same group of recipients 140. As such, it is  
7 advantageous for the business to register clients 110, 140  
8 and keep client 110, 140 accounts in one database 430. The  
9 administrative subsystem 410 is a system for registering  
10 clients 110, 140 and managing system resources based on  
11 client 110, 140 requests. The administrative subsystem 410  
12 communicates with billing subsystem 420. The billing  
13 subsystem 420 detects monetizing (billing) events generated  
14 by the administrative subsystem 410. The billing subsystem  
15 420 can be programmed to charge clients 110, 140  
16 differently for different monetizing events, such as a  
17 recipient 140 taking delivery of document folders 180 when  
18 the document folders 180 are sent C.O.D. (cash on  
19 delivery). A client 110, 140 has an option of specifying a  
20 date of expiration of the document folders 180 temporarily  
21 stored on network 120. The billing subsystem 420 then  
22 charges clients 110, 140 when the document folders 180 are  
23 stored beyond the period of time agreed upon by the  
24 business and the client 110, 140. The billing subsystem  
25 420, in turn, communicates with billing database 430, which  
26  
27  
28

1 may be part of database 175 or a separate database.  
2 Billing database 430 maintains and adjusts client 110, 140  
3 accounts based on information received from billing  
4 subsystem 420. Once a monetizing event occurs, that  
5 information along with a client 110, 140 name is submitted  
6 to billing database 430 to adjust the account of the client  
7 110, 140.  
8

9 Figure 5 is a block diagram illustrating billing  
10 database 430. Billing database 430 contains billing  
11 records 510. Each billing record 510 provides billing  
12 information about a particular client 110, 140.  
13

14 Fig. 6 is a block diagram showing an example of a  
15 billing record 510, in which billing record 510 has the  
16 following two fields: client 110, 140 name and client 110,  
17 140 billing information. The client 110, 140 billing  
18 information may include a client 110, 140 account number,  
19 the entity to whom the bill is to be sent, and how the  
20 client 110, 140 takes responsibility for the payment. When  
21 a monetizing event occurs, a memorandum of that event along  
22 with the client 110, 140 name is forwarded to the billing  
23 database 430, which, in turn adjusts the client 110, 140  
24 account.  
25

26 Fig. 7 is a flow chart showing the operation of  
27 billing subsystem 420. The process starts in step 700. In  
28

1 step 702, a periodic query asks whether billing event has  
2 taken place. The event could be any monetizing event, such  
3 as sending a document folder 180, sending a document folder  
4 180 C.O.D, storing a document folder 180 on destination  
5 computer 170 beyond the agreed-upon period of time, or  
6 requesting transmitting a document folder 180 with  
7 authentication so that a seal 320 is attached. Once a  
8 monetizing event occurs in step 702, the administrative  
9 subsystem 410 sends information regarding the event  
10 including the client's name to the billing subsystem 420,  
11 in step 704. The billing subsystem 420 forwards all this  
12 information to the billing database 430, in step 706. The  
13 billing database 430 adjusts the client's account based on  
14 the information received from the billing subsystem 420, in  
15 step 708. The process ends in step 710. If the  
16 determination in step 702 is negative so that no monetizing  
17 event has taken place, the process loops to the end 710 and  
18 the client's account is not adjusted.

19  
20  
21  
22 Fig. 8 is a flow chart illustrating one operation of  
23 administrative subsystem 410. The administrative process  
24 includes registering clients 110, 140 and maintaining  
25 client 110, 140 resources. In step 802, the process  
26 starts. First, a client 110, 140 registers with the  
27 business by filling out a registration form in step 804.  
28



1 Filling out the registration form, which may be, for  
2 example, a form presented on the World Wide Web, may  
3 require providing the client's name, address, and password  
4 for authorization purposes. In step 806, an authorization  
5 process takes place. Specifically, the business verifies  
6 whether a client 110, 140 is who he claims he is. This  
7 verification can be accomplished, for example, by sending  
8 an e-mail to the client 110, 140 and requesting a response,  
9 or by a human being calling the prospective client 110, 140  
10 on the telephone. The process allows the client 110, 140  
11 to submit new client information in step 807, if needed to  
12 complete the registration requirements as defined by the  
13 business. All the information submitted by the client 110,  
14 140, including the client's name and address, is forwarded  
15 in step 808 to the billing database 430. The process ends  
16 at step 810.

19 Fig. 9 shows an overview of a typical client  
20 registration process (step 804 described above). In  
21 display 902, the client 110, 140 is asked to register with  
22 the business. To do so, the client 110, 140 fills out a  
23 form, in this case an online form. The client 110, 140 may  
24 be prompted by software contained in the administrative  
25 subsystem to enter his name and address, and select a  
26 password Further, in display 904, the client is prompted  
27  
28

1 to re-enter his password for authentication purposes. In  
2 other embodiments, a non-password based authorization check  
3 might be used. The client's password is an important piece  
4 of information, which is used during the client 110, 140  
5 authentication process to ensure that only clients 110, 140  
6 registered with the business can send and receive document  
7 folders 180. Once the client 110, 140 provides all  
8 identification information, a message is displayed in 905  
9 informing the client 110, 140 to submit his registration  
10 information, e.g., by clicking on a "submit" button on his  
11 computer screen. In display frame 906, the client 110, 140  
12 is notified that all of his registration information will  
13 be submitted to billing database 430.

14  
15  
16 The above description is included to illustrate the  
17 operation of the preferred embodiments and is not meant to  
18 limit the scope of the invention. The scope of the  
19 invention is to be limited only by the following claims.  
20 From the above discussion, many variations will be apparent  
21 to one skilled in the art that would yet be encompassed by  
22 the spirit and scope of the present invention.  
23

24 What is claimed is:  
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Claims

1. A method for a business to securely distribute document folders to recipients, said method comprising the steps of:

    sending an electronic document folder to a network of interconnected computers;

    notifying each recipient of electronic document folders intended for said recipient by means of giving said recipient an indirect reference to each electronic document folder intended for said recipient;

    selecting a destination location for each recipient to receive the electronic document folders intended for said recipient, using data provided by said recipient; and

    accumulating the sent electronic document folders at said destination location.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the data provided by each recipient is from the group comprising document reception address data and additional document reception data.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the document reception address data comprises at least one of path

1 information and a method for network document folder  
2 delivery.

3  
4 4. The method of claim 2, wherein the additional  
5 document reception data comprises at least one of receiving  
6 device capabilities and document reception location data.

7 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the indirect  
8 reference to each document folder comprises a folder code  
9 containing information needed to retrieve the document  
10 folder.

11 6. The method of claim 5, wherein the folder code is a  
12 privacy code.

13 7. The method of claim 5, wherein the folder code is  
14 mediacard data, said mediacard data delivered to each  
15 recipient prior to said recipient's accessing an electronic  
16 document folder.

17 8. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step  
18 of modifying the data for best recipient use with regard to  
19 capabilities of a receiving device at said destination  
20 location.

21 9. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step  
22 of a server located on the network of interconnected  
23 computers recording an acknowledgement of a delivery of an  
24 electronic document folder and making said acknowledgment  
25 available to a sender.  
26  
27  
28

1           10. The method of claim 1, further comprising the  
2 step of a recipient retrieving an electronic document  
3 folder based upon providing information contained in said  
4 indirect reference.  
5

6           11. The method of claim 1, further comprising the  
7 step of authenticating at least some documents within the  
8 electronic document folders.  
9

10           12. The method of claim 11, wherein the  
11 authenticating step comprises a seal engine attaching a  
12 seal to at least one document within an electronic document  
13 folder.  
14

15           13. The method of claim 12, wherein the attached seal  
16 comprises information contained in the at least one  
17 document and information not contained in the at least one  
18 document.  
19

20           14. The method of claim 13, wherein the information  
21 not contained in the at least one document comprises at  
22 least one from the group comprising a date of transmission,  
23 a time of transmission, a protocol identification,  
24 information known only by an intended recipient, and a file  
25 size.  
26

27           15. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one  
28 document within a sent document folder has printable  
representation.

1           16. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one  
2 document folder comprises exactly one document.

3           17. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic  
4 document folders are sent using virtual private network  
5 security.  
6

7           18. The method of claim 1, further comprising the  
8 step of charging a recipient upon the recipient's taking  
9 delivery of an electronic document folder when the  
10 electronic document folder has been sent C.O.D.

11           19. The method of claim 1, further comprising the  
12 step of charging a recipient upon the recipient taking  
13 delivery of an electronic document folder when the  
14 electronic document folder has been stored on the network  
15 beyond an agreed-upon period of time.  
16

17           20. The method of claim 1, further comprising the  
18 step of a recipient specifying a date of expiration of an  
19 electronic document folder temporarily stored on the  
20 network.  
21

22           21. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of  
23 notifying each recipient comprises sending a notification  
24 via email.

25           22. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of  
26 notifying each recipient comprises sending a notification  
27 over a cellular phone.  
28

1           23. The method of claim 1, further comprising the  
2 step of converting a sent electronic document folder into a  
3 page description language before sending a link to the  
4 electronic document folder to a recipient.  
5

6           24. A system for a business to securely distribute  
7 document folders to recipients, said system comprising:

8                 at least one sending device for sending to and  
9 temporarily storing electronic document folders on a  
10 network of interconnected computers;

11                at least one destination computer for  
12 accumulating electronic document folders that have been  
13 sent to the network of interconnected computers; and  
14

15                coupled to each destination computer, a receiving  
16 device for delivering electronic document folders to  
17 recipients.  
18

19           25. The system of claim 24, further comprising a  
20 notification device for notifying a recipient of a sent  
21 electronic document folder, by means of an indirect  
22 reference to the electronic document folder, said  
23 notification device from the group comprising a Web-enabled  
24 personal computer, a Web-enabled Internet appliance, and a  
25 cellular telephone.

26           26. The system of claim 24, wherein said network of  
27 interconnected computers is from the group comprising the  
28

1 Internet, an intranet, a wide-area network, and a local  
2 area network.

3 27. The system of claim 24, wherein the at least one  
4 sending device is from the group comprising a scanner, a  
5 facsimile machine, and a computer.

6 28. The system of claim 24, wherein the receiving  
7 device is from the group comprising a Web-enabled personal  
8 computer, a Web-enabled printer, a Web-connected digital  
9 copier, and a Web-enabled Internet appliance.

10 29. The system of claim 24, wherein the at least one  
11 destination computer is located at a partnership facility  
12 having a pre-established relationship with the business.

13 30. The system of claim 24, further comprising an  
14 administrative subsystem coupled to the network of  
15 interconnected computers for managing system resources  
16 based on requests of senders and recipients of electronic  
17 document folders.

18 31. The system of claim 30, further comprising a  
19 billing subsystem coupled to the administrative subsystem  
20 for detecting monetizing events and charging at least one  
21 of a sender and a recipient upon the occurrence of a  
22 monetizing event.



1           32. The system of claim 31, further comprising a  
2 billing database coupled to the billing subsystem for  
3 maintaining and adjusting accounts of senders and  
4 recipients based on information received from the billing  
5 subsystem.  
6

7           33. The system of claim 31, wherein a monetizing  
8 event is sending an electronic document folder.

9           34. The system of claim 31, wherein a monetizing  
10 event is sending an electronic document folder C.O.D.

11           35. The system of claim 31, wherein a monetizing event  
12 is temporarily storing an electronic document folder on the  
13 network beyond an agreed-upon period of time.  
14

15           36. The system of claim 31, wherein a monetizing  
16 event is a recipient requesting that a sent electronic  
17 document folder be authenticated.

18           37. The system of claim 24, further comprising a seal  
19 engine coupled to the network of interconnected computers  
20 for attaching a seal to at least one document within an  
21 electronic document folder.  
22

23           38. A computer readable medium containing a computer  
24 program product for a business to securely distribute  
25 document folders to recipients, said computer program  
26 product comprising:  
27  
28

1           program code for causing the sending of  
2 electronic document folders to a network of interconnected  
3 computers;  
4

5           program code for notifying a recipient of a sent  
6 electronic document folder by means of an indirect  
7 reference to the electronic document folder;

8           program code for selecting a destination computer  
9 for an electronic document folder using data provided by a  
10 recipient; and

11           program code for accumulating sent electronic  
12 document folders at the destination computer.  
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1  
2 BUSINESS METHOD FOR SECURE DOCUMENT FOLDER DISTRIBUTION  
3

4 Abstract of the Disclosure

5 A system, method, and computer readable medium for a  
6 business to securely distribute potentially large  
7 collections of document folders (180) to recipients (140).  
8 The system comprises a sending device (160) for sending the  
9 document folders (180) and temporarily storing the document  
10 folders (180) on a network (120) of interconnected  
11 computers (170), a destination computer (170) for  
12 accumulating the sent document folders (180) destined for a  
13 particular recipient (140), and a receiving device (130)  
14 for receiving the accumulated document folders (180) from  
15 the destination device (170). The method comprises the  
16 steps of sending the document folders (180) to a network  
17 (120) of interconnected computers (170); notifying each  
18 recipient (140) of an electronic document folder (180) by  
19 means of an indirect reference to the electronic document  
20 folder (180); selecting a destination location (170) for  
21 the electronic document folder (180) using data supplied by  
22 the recipient (140); and accumulating the electronic  
23 document folders (180) at the destination location (170).  
24  
25  
26

27 19100/04863/DOCS/1084769.6  
28

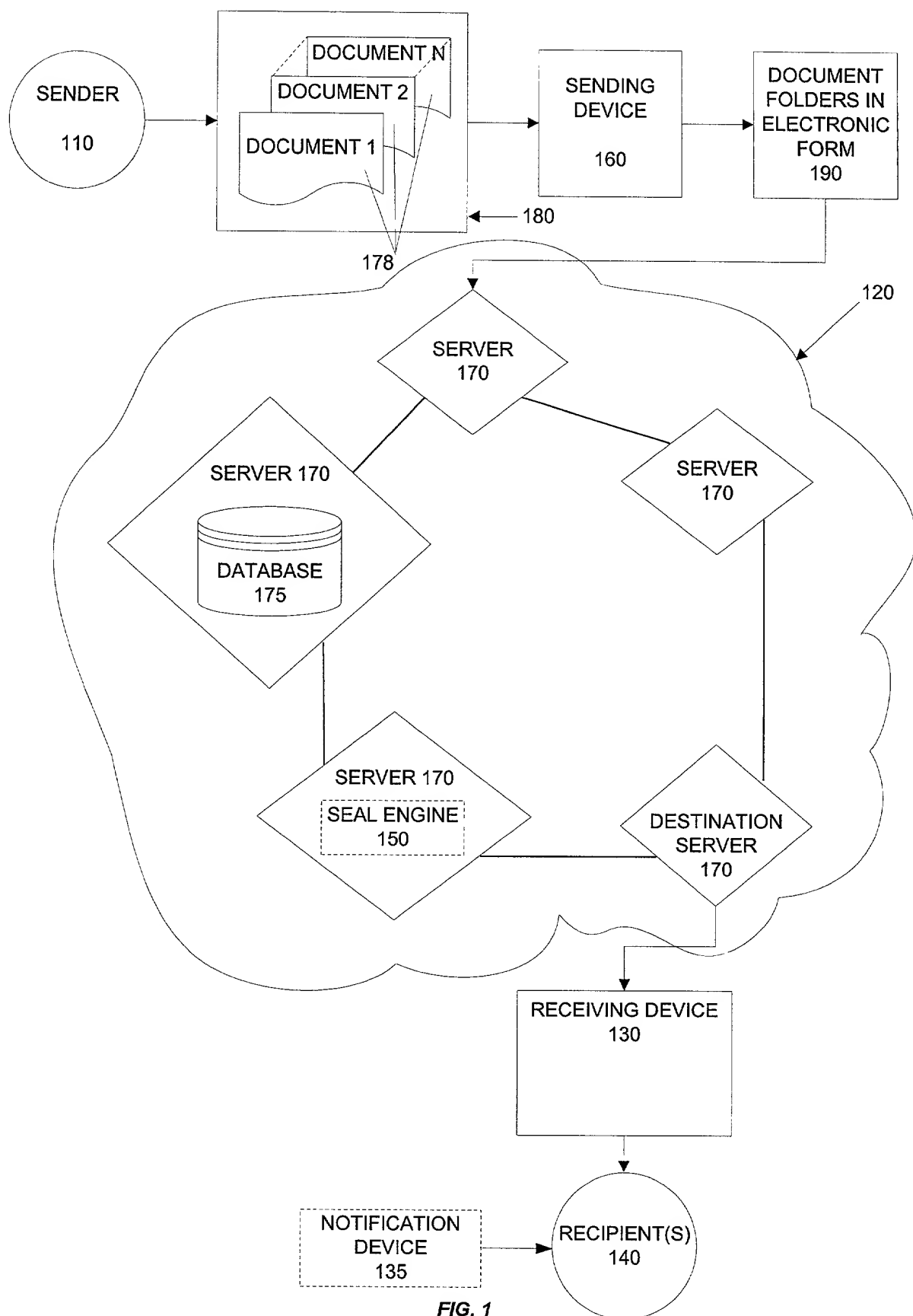


FIG. 1

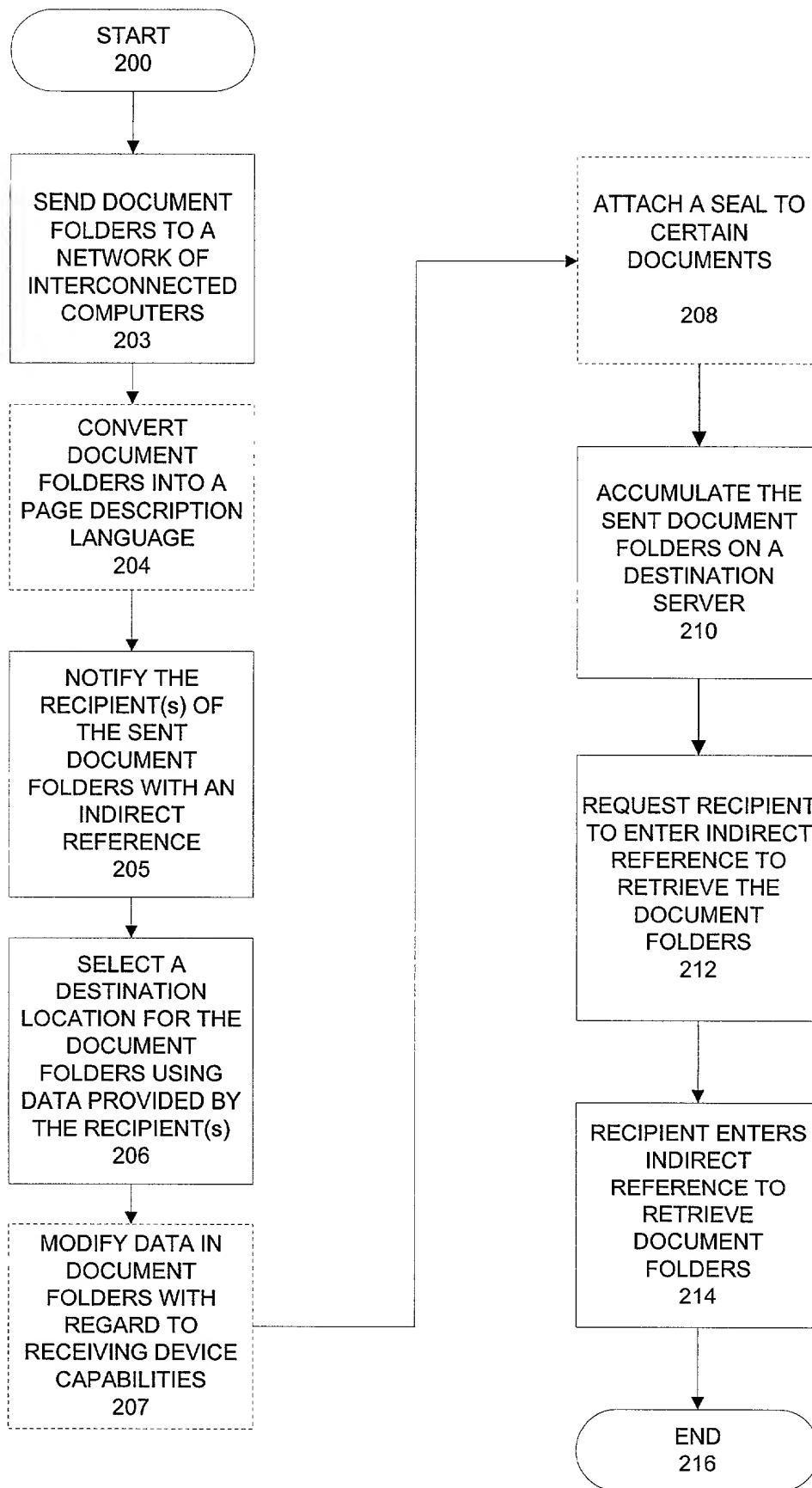


FIG. 2

222

SENDER'S NAME	RECIPIENT'S NAME	DOCUMENT 178 RECEPTION ADDRESS DATA	RECEIVING DEVICE 130 CAPABILITIES	DOCUMENT 178 RECEPTION LOCATION DATA
SMITH	WARREN	FTP:/ AVISTADEL. COM/ DOC/PRINT/ TTY.PRN	COLOR, 300 DPI, PDF	73 DX STREET, BESTTOWN, CA 59959  333.444 555.66
• •	• • •	• • •	• •	• • • •

FIG. 2A

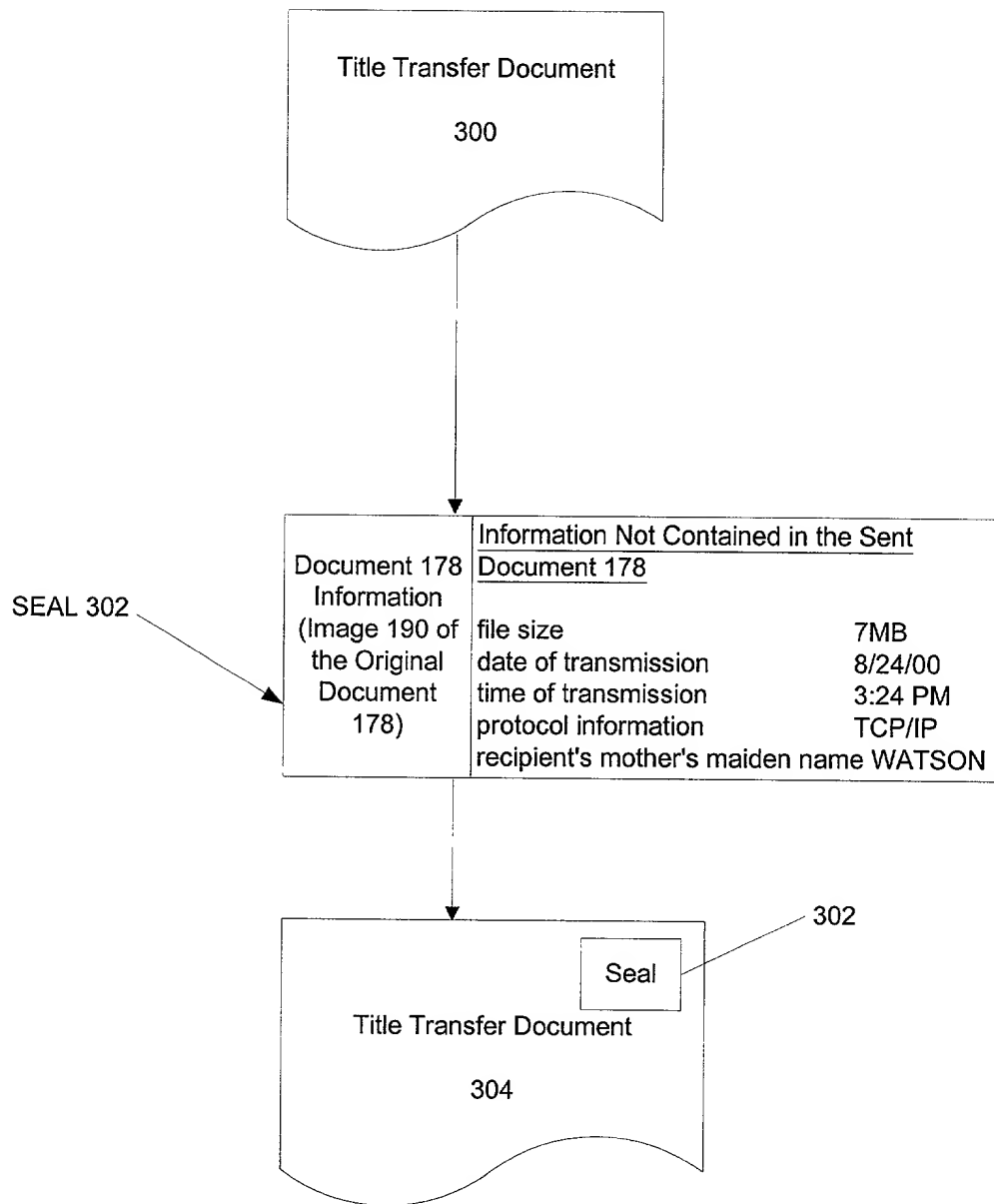


FIG. 3

SERVER 170

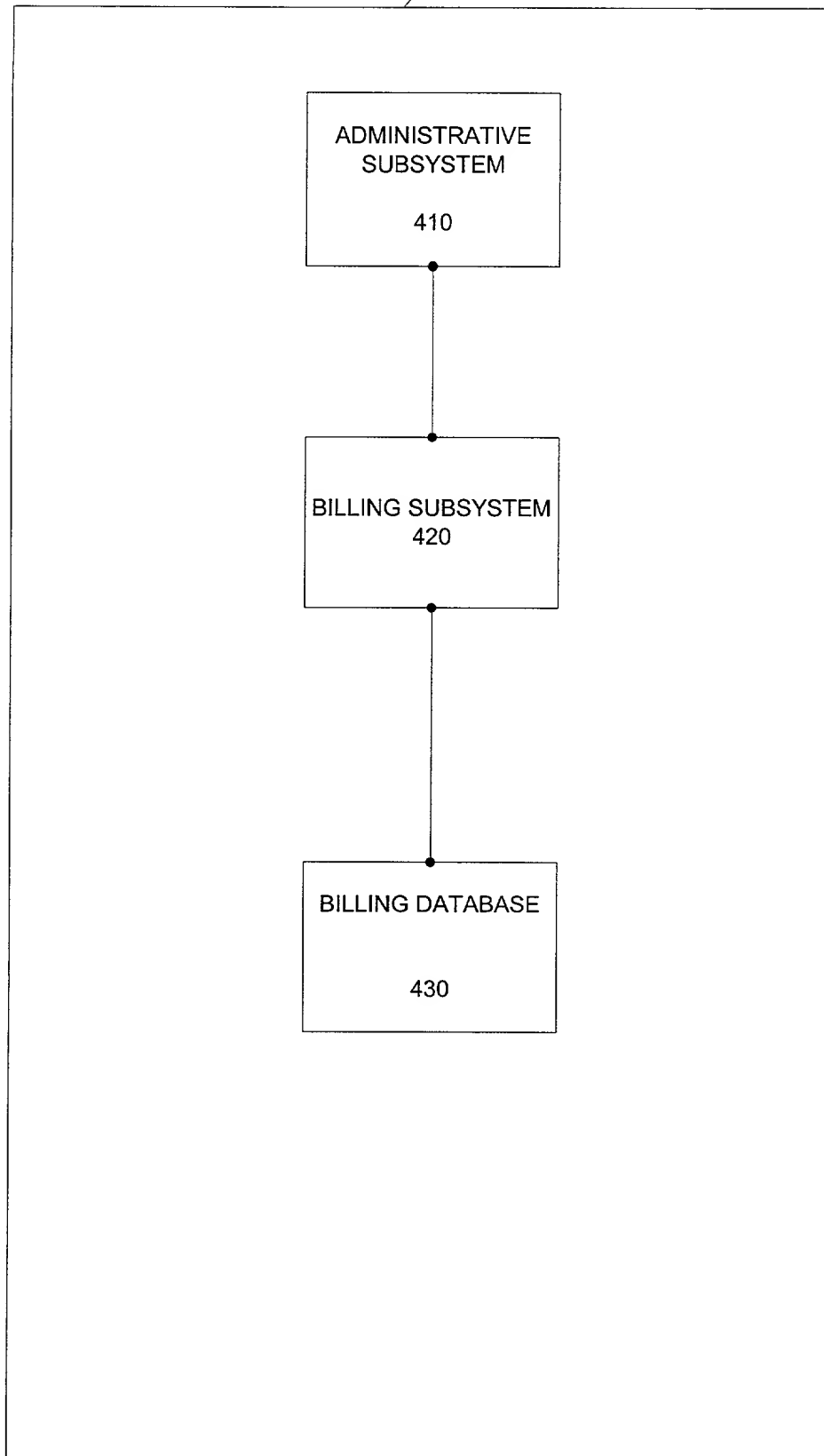
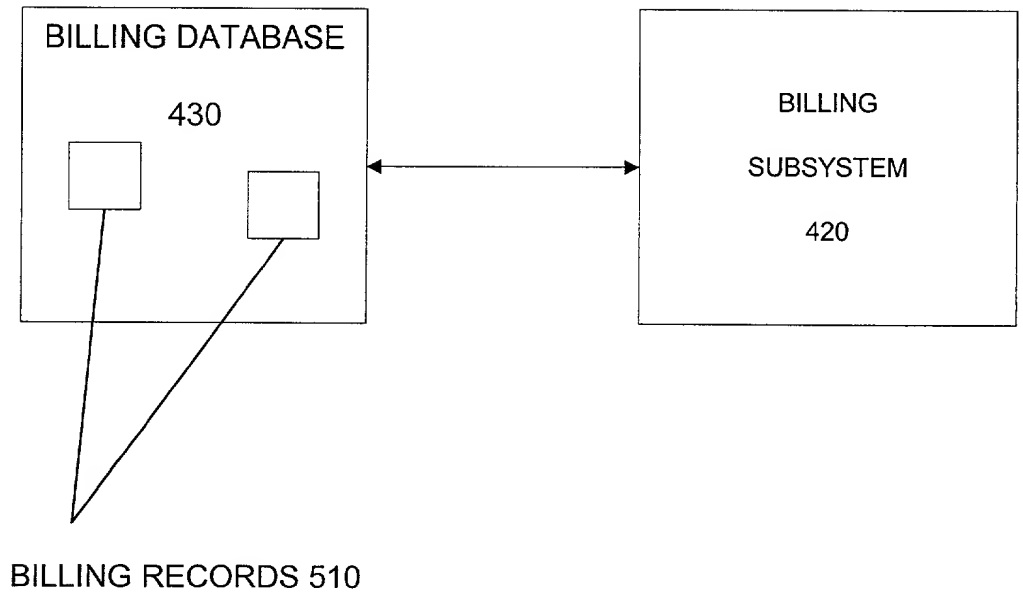


FIG. 4



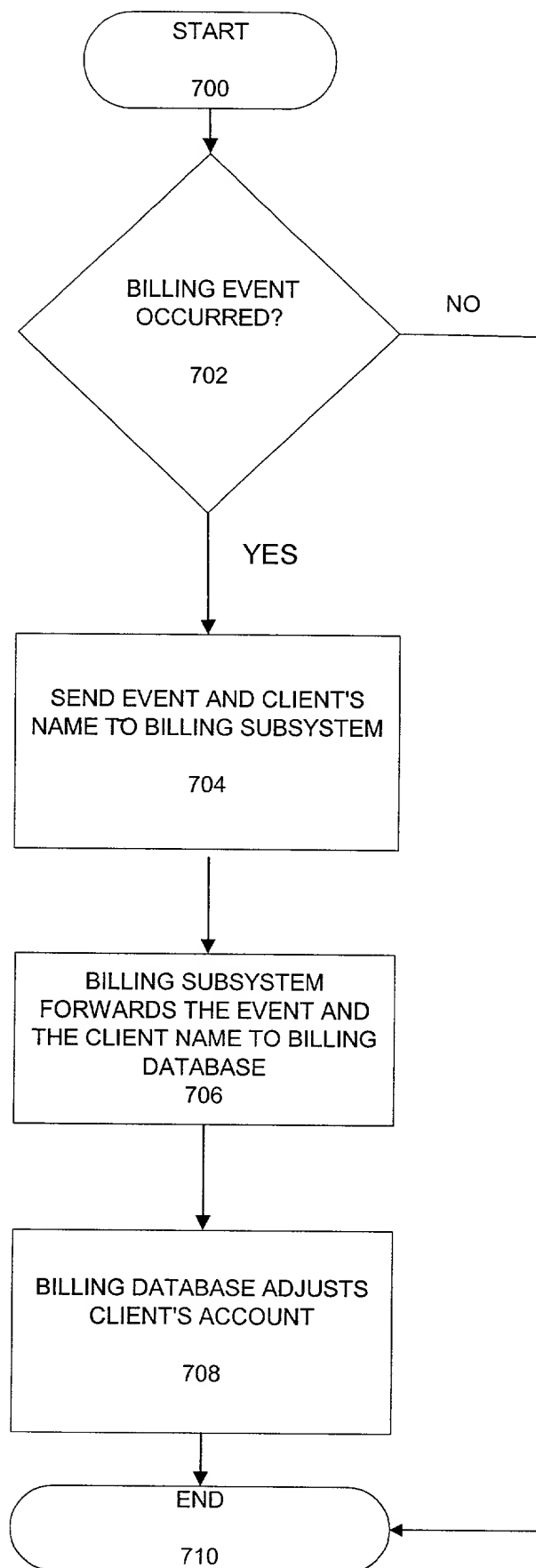


**FIG. 5**

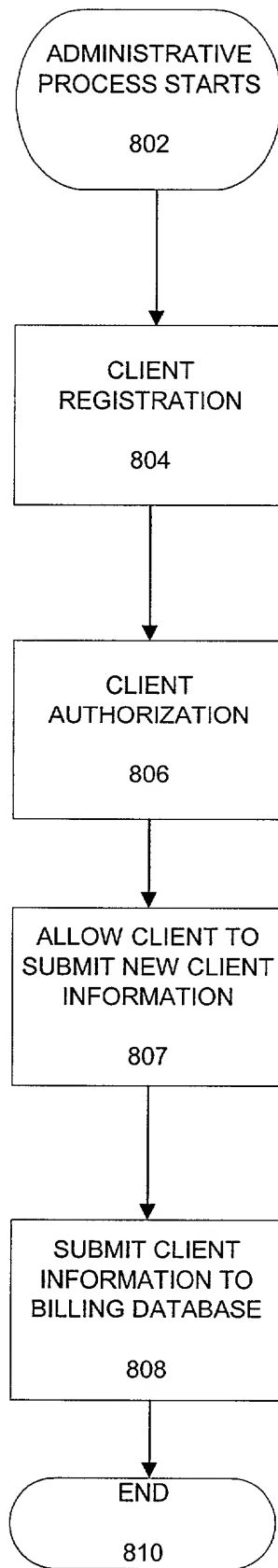
CLIENT'S NAME	CLIENT'S BILLING INFORMATION
---------------	------------------------------

510  
BILLING RECORD

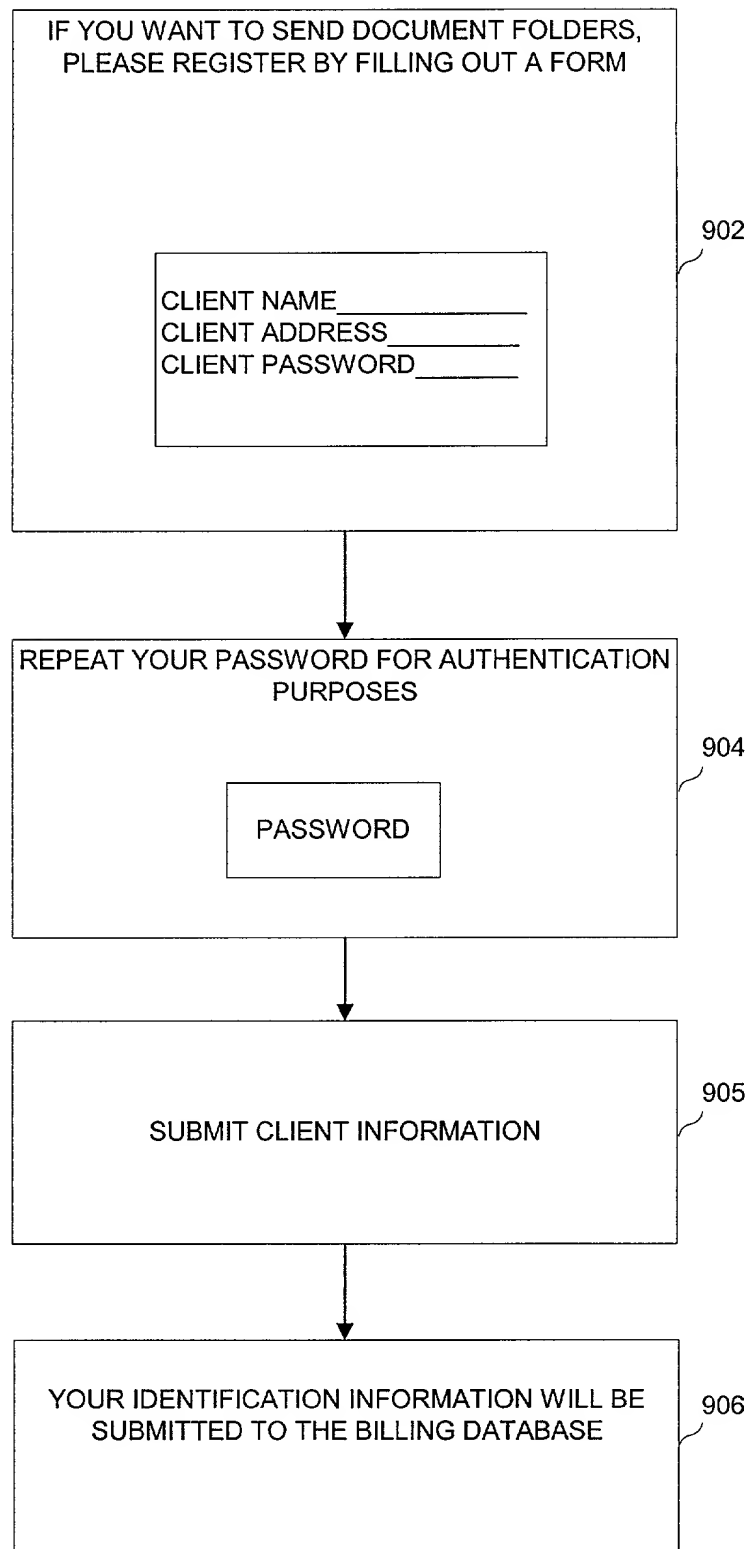
**FIG. 6**



**FIG. 7**



**FIG. 8**



**FIG. 9**

<b>0010/PTO</b> Rev. 6/95  <b>U.S. Department of Commerce</b> Patent and Trademark Office  <b>DECLARATION FOR UTILITY OR DESIGN PATENT APPLICATION</b>	Attorney Docket Number	<b>4863(CFP1587US)</b>
	First Named Inventor	<b>Roger D. Melen</b>
	<i>COMPLETE IF KNOWN</i>	
	Application Number	<b>not yet known</b>
	Filing Date	<b>October 24, 2000</b>
	Group Art Unit	<b>not yet known</b>
	Examiner Name	<b>not yet known</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Declaration Submitted with Initial Filing      OR <input type="checkbox"/> Declaration Submitted after Initial Filing		

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address, and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

**BUSINESS METHOD FOR SECURE DOCUMENT FOLDER DISTRIBUTION**

the specification of which (Title of the Invention)

☒ is attached hereto

OR

☐ was filed on (MM/DD/YYYY) [ ] as United States Application Number or PCT International Application Number [ ] and was amended on (MM/DD/YYYY) [ ] (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment specifically referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37 Code of Federal Regulations. § 1.56.

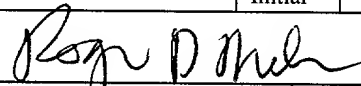
I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code § 119 (a)-(d) or § 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or § 365 (a) of any PCT international application which designated at least one country other than the United States of America, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or of any PCT international application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Prior Foreign Application Number(s)	Country	Foreign Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Priority Not Claimed	Certified Copy Attached?	
				YES	NO
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

☐ Additional foreign application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority sheet attached hereto:

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code § 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

Application Number(s)	Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional provisional application numbers are listed on a supplemental sheet attached hereto.

DECLARATION				Page 2	
<p>I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code § 120 of any United States application(s), or § 365(c) of any PCT international application designating the United States of America, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT international application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations § 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application.</p>					
U.S. Parent Application Number	PCT Parent Number	Parent Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Parent Patent Number (if applicable)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional U.S. or PCT international application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority sheet attached hereto.					
<p>As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith:</p>					
Name		Registration Number	Name		Registration Number
Edward J. Radlo Brian M. Hoffman		26,793 39,713	Anthony M. Palazzolo		39,323
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional attorney(s) and/or agent(s) named on a supplemental sheet attached hereto.					
<p>Please direct all correspondence to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Edward J. Radlo</b>  <b>Fenwick &amp; West LLP</b>  <b>Two Palo Alto Square</b>  <b>Palo Alto, CA 94306</b>  <b>U.S.A.</b></p>					
Telephone		(650) 858-7142		Fax	(650) 494-1417
<p>I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.</p>					
<b>Name of Sole or First Inventor:</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> A petition has been filed for this unsigned inventor			
Given Name	ROGER	Middle Initial	D.	Family Name	MELEN
Inventor's Signature				Date	Oct 24, 2000
Residence: City	Los Altos Hills	State	CA	Country	U.S.A.
Mailing Address	12992 Vista Del Valle Court				
Mailing Address					
City	Los Altos Hills	State	CA	Zip	94022
				Country	U.S.A.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Additional inventors are being named on supplemental sheet(s) attached hereto					

10/24/2000 10:00 AM

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DECLARATION				ADDITIONAL INVENTOR(S) Supplemental Sheet			
<b>Name of Additional Joint Inventor, if any:</b>				<input type="checkbox"/> A petition has been filed for this unsigned inventor			
Given Name	BORIS	Middle Initial		Family Name	KRTOLICA	Suffix e.g. Jr.	
Inventor's Signature	<i>B. Krtolica</i>				Date	10/24/2000	
Residence: City	Saratoga	State	CA	Country	U.S.A.	Citizenship	U.S.A.
Mailing Address	12527 Blue Meadow Court						
Mailing Address							
City	Saratoga	State	CA	Zip	95070	Country	U.S.A.

<b>Name of Additional Joint Inventor, if any:</b>				<input type="checkbox"/> A petition has been filed for this unsigned inventor			
Given Name	NEIL	Middle Initial		Family Name	WILLIAMS	Suffix e.g. Jr.	
Inventor's Signature	<i>Neil Williams</i>				Date	10/24/2000	
Residence: City	Los Gatos	State	CA	Country	U.S.A.	Citizenship	U.S.A.
Mailing Address	234 Harding Avenue						
Mailing Address							
City	Los Gatos	State	CA	Zip	95030	Country	U.S.A.

<b>Name of Additional Joint Inventor, if any:</b>				<input type="checkbox"/> A petition has been filed for this unsigned inventor			
Given Name		Middle Initial		Family Name		Suffix e.g. Jr.	
Inventor's Signature					Date		
Residence: City		State		Country		Citizenship	
Mailing Address							
Mailing Address							
City		State		Zip		Country	

<b>Name of Additional Joint Inventor, if any:</b>				<input type="checkbox"/> A petition has been filed for this unsigned inventor			
Given Name		Middle Initial		Family Name		Suffix e.g. Jr.	
Inventor's Signature					Date		
Residence: City		State		Country		Citizenship	
Mailing Address							
Mailing Address							
City		State		Zip		Country	
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional inventors are being named on supplemental sheet(s) attached hereto							